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Argotist Online Poetry

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Mar 3, 2024

Poem by Adam Fieled

THE STUDIO

The vista which then opened was one I never could've anticipated in the Nineties—the PAFA campus was set as a series of jeweled buildings smack in the center of Center City Philadelphia, a few blocks from City Hall. Mary was then still in enough good standing to maintain her own studio on campus. I had to sign in as a guest on the ground floor every time I visited. The room was a large rectangle; the elongated back wall was one big window, looking out on the western progression of Cherry Street, towards Broad. Until Mary and Abby, I had no fixed notions of painting; now, I dived in with the frisson of one let loose in a wonderland. Everything about Mary was magical

to me, and the canvases arrayed around the studio, largely male nudes, recumbent or not, plugged into Mary's fascination with classical mythology, & made a case for Mary as a Don Juana, a seducer of men. Heady stuff, and often Mary's tales were about men who had posed for her. Vertiginous, but I was on the verge, nonetheless, of a full-on love affair, maybe

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marriage, to a women powerful enough to be called a *Creatrix,* a female goddess in the world, & I knew it. Sleeping with Mary meant something it never could with others; rather than a mere palliative, if you could get her to put out in the studio, you were plugging into a mythological web, glistening and intricate, stitching yourself, possibly, into history. The come was in color.

at March 03, 2024

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Aug 1, 2023

Poem by Adam Fieled

EQUATIONS #25

When I converse with N on the phone, in about my thirteenth year, our heads open up together, and we create an imaginative landscape out of nothing at all. Events around us, our classmates, notorious or boring or uproarious events of the days get used as fodder, parties, dances, and we hoist the whole rig up and sail it into the sky. We dance ourselves around our desire for each other: are we friends, or could we be more? When we broadcast together, other will sit and listen, spellbound. But to the left and to the right, even at thirteen, is the impulse to share our bodies as well as our souls and brains. N is conservative this way. She maintains a deep need to keep physicality light in and around her— she doesn't play sports, can't swim, is an excellent dancer but not a dab hand as a walker of city blocks, either. All her thoughts are of transcendentalizing past her own body, which is arrayed around her like marsh to wade through. The problem is a hold she wants to maintain over my emotions. We act, often, like newlyweds, but because she will not submit to me physically in any way, my emotions, unconsciously set at a skeptical angle, cannot cleave to her finally, like a ship docking in at a port. Sexual devotion often starts, I learn later, with the body, the physical mechanism. Our bodies are the primordial fact of who, and what we are. So, we talk on the phone for hours, imaginative leap follows imaginative leap, but imaginative leaps are not a basis for a man's devotion. Not that I'm aware of this at thirteen. All I know is that our brains are doing something intense together, and I like the feeling, but my soul craves a reality somewhere between us that cuts deeper, from sharper, starker angles, into a sense of achievement, conquest, victory, a permanent sense of marking and being marked.

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Later, it is Trish who brings all these algorithms together. She knows only too well what I am, and what I want. We imaginatively leap all over the cosmos together, hand in hand or separately, but the climax, the final imposition of the most profound shared imagination into the most profound imaginative leap, is back into our bodies and, when we are good together, out again, out into a re-entry of the cosmos, as a finality.

at August 01, 2023

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May 4, 2023

Poem by Adam Fieled

EQUATIONS #26

Audrey, as a tangent to N, took the idea, not of broadcasting gossip but of sharing and disseminating literature, as a fait accompli move to establish romance, drama, suspense, and rich entanglement in her life. Prisoner of a rich background, and with a preacher for a father, she latched onto me as a purveyor of sweets for her, from my books to my looks to a sense of deference she wanted me to sometimes have as a way of demonstrating respect for her roots. The one determinative moment— we stood, with a crowd of poets, outside a bar in Andersonville, Chicago, as a night of festivities ended, and I was either going to pick her up somehow or not— ended in, for me, a practical response of denial. Her apartment was in an obscure neighborhood in Chicago, I was staying in the distant 'burb Palatine, and was due in Rockford the next afternoon. For Audrey, as she was later candid about, I was resisting something compelling in the universe which required that we spend the night together. She was heartbroken, with her Indiana-bred sense of being cornfed (blonde, voluptuous, clear complexion), and with the conviction she had that anything she wanted could always be hers. Rich equations suffer greatly from senses of entitlement, emanating from the rich, and dousing all that they touch with a glaze of non-recognition, of obliviousness. This was Audrey's contradiction— give her a text, available to be read at her leisure, incapable of vocalizing need or difference of any kind, and she could rise to the occasion brilliantly. Texts had a way of ejaculating into her brain and heart tissue, in a lovemaking routine (with the right text at the right time) extremely pleasurable for her. As I stood with her outside Moody's Pub, a flesh and blood entity— needy, morose, possibly surprising or

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disobedient the wrong way— turned her interest tempered with diffidence. This decided the night for us. Had we been ensconced together for several days, as I had been with Wendy, things might have been different. But when two possible lovers are too transient to each other, the magic spells don't work, incantations fall flat, and it is learned again that for equations to take on flesh in the world, there is no substitute for real, raw time.

at May 04, 2023

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Aug 19, 2022

Poem by Adam Fieled

CHELTENHAM ELEGY #702

His heart ached within a drowsy, numbed trance.
Cameras panned to him pacing the black-top, even
blacker at 3 am, which opens out on the expanse
of Mill Road, down the hill, past the school. Night deepened,
he was lonely enough to cry, heartsick for being
the only one of a scabrous tribe gutsy enough to say the name
which even then had rent Cheltenham, riddled
with bullets like a dog's corpse, assassins fleeing
the site of the hit, where the one kid, bound for fame,
did for himself the trick of ditching a tepid middle.

He levitates past himself, flies with bugs into crevices,
is the pilot of the few airplanes wafting by, Pegasus-like
for a mind intent on flight, meeting divinity, heaven's bliss
from a cockpit. Myers' schoolyard glistens like spikes.
She knew him then, at her end- saw how the spine
imposed truth on empty gesture, feeling on pretense,
vital life on the living death of their shared enterprise.
This, he could never know; yet without knowing how, why,
he strode past her emptied house that night, tense,
sweating in summer's stew, pallid in cold surprise.

The apostate flies around a small room, piles of books,

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papers scattered, forests of drafts, faintly heard bird-song.
Verdurous plains suggest themselves; moss-softened nooks;
just out of time, to a mind o'er spelled by word-song.
He can only fly as he reads, over & over, the lays
already fastened to moss & flower, secured above
shallow stream. His friend waits, in stealth.
The early morning ride he caught then, from love
given, wasn't her- she had gone the way
there is no coming back- yet he slept himself back to health.

at August 19, 2022

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